

WHO

World Health Organization

TOPIC:

**Preventing the Next
Global Pandemic in an
Era of Emerging
Infectious Diseases**

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World Health Organization

I- Committee Description:

The World Health Organization (WHO) was established in 1948, and its founding date is celebrated annually as World Health Day. The WHO was founded following World War II, as countries recognized that diseases could spread across borders and that global cooperation was vital to protect public health. Its primary objectives are to improve the health of people around the world, coordinate international responses to disease outbreaks and health emergencies, help countries strengthen their healthcare systems, develop international health standards and guidelines, support research on vaccination programs, and prevent diseases through substantial efforts. Remarkably, in 1980, WHO led a global vaccination campaign that eliminated smallpox, making it the first and only human disease to be **COMPLETELY** eradicated.

As of today, the WHO continues to play a crucial role in addressing global health challenges and promotes the well-being of people worldwide. Moreover, the WHO works closely with



governments, health professionals, scientists, and other international organizations to work on responding to health crises and improve access to equal healthcare. It also focuses on important issues such as mental health, nutrition, sanitation, and the prevention of infectious and non-infectious diseases. The WHO aims

to create a healthier and safer world where all people have a chance to achieve the highest possible standard of health, and that would be able to happen through knowledge sharing.

II-Introduction to Topic:

A. Significance/Importance:

The COVID-19 Pandemic demonstrated the devastating consequences of emerging infectious diseases, causing millions of deaths, overwhelming healthcare systems, and disrupting economies worldwide. In today's interconnected world, pathogens can spread rapidly across borders through international travel and trade, making pandemic prevention a matter of global security rather than solely a national concern.

According to the WHO, more than 777 million confirmed cases of COVID-19 and over 7 million reported deaths have been recorded globally. Meanwhile, the World Bank estimates that the pandemic resulted in the most severe global economic downturn since WWII, pushing millions of people into poverty. These impacts highlighted major weaknesses in global disease surveillance and international cooperation.

In addition to COVID-19, recent outbreaks of Ebola virus disease, monkeypox, Avian influenza, and other emerging infectious diseases have demonstrated the continuing threat posed by zoonotic pathogens. The WHO estimates that approximately “75% of newly emerging infectious diseases in humans originate from animals”, emphasizing the need for stronger surveillance, early detection, and a coordinated health approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human, animal, and environmental health. Moreover, zoonotic influenza infections are unlikely to be eliminated, and pandemic threats persist. One may ask why such a pandemic persists. This is due to wild aquatic birds serving as a permanent natural reservoir, meaning pandemic risks remain continuous. Monkeypox is a disease similar to smallpox caused by a virus. It causes flu-like symptoms such as fever and chills, as well as a rash that can take weeks to clear. There’s no proven treatment for Monkeypox, but it usually goes away on its own. Healthcare experts recommend getting vaccinated if you’re at higher risk for Mpox. But Monkeypox continues to be a threat today,

and an upsurge in cases in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and other countries, driven by clades Ia and Ib, has raised concern.

Scientists also warn that factors such as climate change, deforestation, urbanization, antimicrobial resistance, and increased human-animal interactions are increasing the likelihood of future disease outbreaks. The WHO has identified pandemic preparedness as one of the world's most urgent public health priorities, emphasizing the need for stronger surveillance systems, equitable access to vaccines and treatments, rapid info sharing, and resilient health care systems.

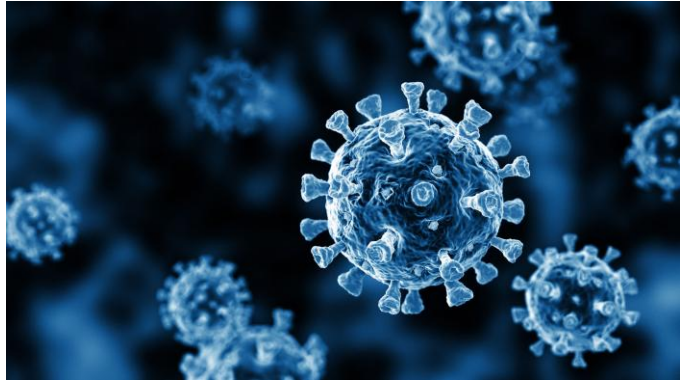
B. Main events:

1- **Ebola outbreaks:** According to the WHO, in May of 2026, an Ebola outbreak was confirmed in both Central and Eastern Africa (Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda). The Bundibugyo species of Ebola involved is one for which there is no vaccine or specific treatment, though work is



ongoing to test promising candidates. The outbreak is occurring in a challenging context: a humanitarian crisis and a remote, densely populated area, combined with high population and trade movements. WHO is scaling up support to the governments of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda by strengthening surveillance, contact tracing, clinical preparedness and management, delivery of supplies and community engagement, and cross-border preparedness. Community engagement will be key. It is only when communities are engaged in the response that such outbreaks are brought under control.

2- COVID-19: Cases of novel coronavirus (nCoV) were first detected in China in December 2019, with the virus spreading rapidly to other countries across the world. This led WHO to declare a Public Health Emergency of International Concern (PHEIC) on January 30, 2020, and to characterize the outbreak as a pandemic on March 11, 2020.



On the 5th of May 2023, more than three years into the pandemic, the WHO

Emergency Committee on COVID-19 recommended to the Director-General, who accepted the recommendation, that given the disease was by then well established and ongoing, it no longer fit the definition of a PHEIC. This does not mean the pandemic itself is over, but the global emergency it caused is - for now. A review committee will be established to develop long-term, standing recommendations for countries on how to manage COVID-19 on an ongoing basis.

Since the COVID-19 pandemic started, over 2 million people in the European Region have died from the disease. On 25 October 2023, WHO/Europe made several changes to its respiratory virus surveillance and data reporting systems. The COVID-19 Situation Dashboard played a pivotal role in providing essential information during the early stages of the pandemic. However, the landscape has now shifted, and so have data needs.

A new WHO/Europe COVID-19 Information Hub is replacing the previous COVID-19 Situation Dashboard to serve as a comprehensive resource, providing links to the most current health information, datasets, and products concerning COVID-19.

C. Link to SDGs:

SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being

The matter of preventing the next global pandemic and strengthening preparedness for emerging infectious diseases directly aligns with Sustainable Development Goal 3, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages. Emerging infectious diseases pose a significant threat to global health, economic stability, and sustainable development, as demonstrated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Strengthening disease surveillance systems, investing in resilient healthcare infrastructure, promoting equitable access to vaccines and medical countermeasures, and enhancing international cooperation are all essential to reducing the risk and impact of future pandemics. By improving global preparedness and response, Member States can protect public health, save lives, and build more resilient healthcare systems capable of addressing future health emergencies.



SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

The challenge of preventing the next global pandemic and addressing emerging infectious diseases directly aligns with SDG 17, which emphasizes global partnership to achieve sustainable development. Since infectious diseases can spread across borders and impact communities worldwide, global cooperation is essential to prevent a global pandemic and to strengthen preparedness and response efforts.



Cooperation between member States, international organizations, and scientific institutions enables the exchange of critical data, research findings, medical innovation, and financial support.

Through international cooperation, we can reduce the likelihood of a new potential global pandemic.

D. Link to the Theme:

The topic of preventing the next global pandemic represents the core foundation of the yin and yang philosophy, as it highlights the need to balance scientific progress, global responsibilities, and national priorities with international cooperation. Just as yin and yang represent interconnected forces that depend on each other, pandemic prevention requires unity among nations to create a healthier, more resilient world.

E. Link to the Pillars of Good Governance:

Responsiveness: Responsiveness is a fundamental pillar of good governance in addressing the cross-border transmission of fatal infectious diseases such as Ebola and Hantavirus. It refers to the ability of governments, public health institutions, and international organizations to respond quickly and appropriately to emerging outbreaks while addressing the needs of affected populations. In vulnerable regions, delayed reporting, weak surveillance systems, and limited healthcare capacity can allow diseases to spread beyond national borders. Through timely information sharing, rapid deployment of medical personnel and resources, and coordinated emergency responses, effective governance strengthens global health security, limits the spread of disease, and reduces the impact of outbreaks. Within the framework of the World Health

Organization (WHO), responsiveness is essential for promoting international cooperation and ensuring that health emergencies are managed before they escalate into global crises.



Efficiency and Effectiveness: Efficiency and effectiveness are equally important pillars of good governance in managing infectious disease outbreaks. Efficiency focuses on maximizing the use of limited financial, medical, and human resources while effectiveness ensures that public health measures achieve their intended outcomes. For diseases such as Ebola and Hantavirus, this includes implementing

evidence-based surveillance systems, strengthening laboratory capacity, improving border health measures, and ensuring the timely distribution of vaccines, treatments, and protective equipment where available. By coordinating national and international efforts through the World Health Organization (WHO), governments can reduce duplication of efforts, improve emergency preparedness, and deliver sustainable public health interventions that protect vulnerable populations while limiting the cross-border spread of infectious diseases.

III-Subtopics:

A. Addressing the Risk of Cross-Border Transmission of Fatal Diseases Such as Ebola and Hantavirus in Vulnerable Regions:

The rapid movement of people, animals, and goods across international borders has increased the risk of infectious diseases spreading beyond their country of origin, posing a significant risk to

global health security. Fatal diseases such as Ebola and Hantavirus can spread rapidly in vulnerable regions where health care systems are under-resourced, as well as where border health measures are weak. These conditions delay outbreak detection and response, allowing localized epidemics to escalate into regional or international health emergencies.

The average Ebola disease case fatality rate is around 50%. Case fatality rates have varied from 25–90% in past outbreaks.

Ebola disease first occurred in 1976 in two simultaneous outbreaks: one outbreak was of Sudan virus disease in Nzara in what is now South Sudan, and the other outbreak was of Ebola virus disease in Yambuku, in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The 2014–2016 Ebola virus disease outbreak in West Africa was the largest and most complex Ebola outbreak since the virus was first discovered in 1976. There were more cases and deaths in this outbreak than all others combined. It also spread between countries, starting in Guinea, then moving across land borders to Sierra Leone and Liberia. On the other hand, Hantaviruses are a group of viruses carried by rodents that can cause severe disease in humans and high fatality rates depending on the strain. Although human-to-human transmission is uncommon, it has been documented for the Andes virus in South America.

Preventing the cross-border transmission of these diseases requires strengthened disease surveillance, timely information sharing, coordinated emergency responses, effective border health measures, and sustained international cooperation. As the leading global health authority, the World Health Organization (WHO) plays a critical role in supporting Member States to prevent, detect, and respond to outbreaks before they become a case of IPHC (International Public Health Crisis).



B. Ensuring Equitable Access to Vaccines, Treatments, and Medical Resources During Global Health Emergencies:

It is extremely important to ensure the protection of life and control infectious diseases without inequity. But the COVID-19 pandemic highlighted significant disparities in the global health system, particularly when it comes to access to vaccines and medical supplies, as well as access to them, in low- and middle-income countries compared to high-income countries. This has deprived millions of timely access to life-saving resources and has added to already weak healthcare systems, enabling the virus to spread. The gaps have shown that no country is safe if other countries are not provided with the means of an adequate response. International efforts were initiated, like COVAX, in order to promote equitable distribution of vaccines and to support countries with limited resources. However, barriers like vaccine nationalism, production capacity, funding issues, and others have made it difficult to achieve equal access in some parts. In addition to vaccines, there are other factors that contribute to equitable access, such as having diagnostic tests,

treatments, personal protective equipment (PPE), trained health care professionals, and resilient health care infrastructure as needed. It is therefore relevant to recall that new infectious diseases will continue to emerge, and that the development of locally produced vaccines and medicines, in addition to investment in health systems, are key aspects that must be implemented to act immediately and effectively in the event of a health crisis.

IV-Main Countries:

1. Democratic Republic of the Congo:

During the 2018–2020 Ebola outbreak, the DRC recorded 3,462 cases and 2,279 deaths, a 66% case-fatality rate. In the 2025 Ebola outbreak, there were 64 cases and 45 deaths, a 70.3% case-fatality rate. The outbreak was declared over on December 1, 2025. The DRC also faces multiple infectious-disease threats simultaneously, including cholera, measles, yellow fever, and vaccine-



derived polio. WHO reported that these outbreaks were occurring alongside a major humanitarian crisis in 2025.

2. India:

It is the third largest producer of vaccines by volume in the world, and the 14th largest producer by value. India is one of the biggest countries possessing a strong supply of affordable vaccines, medicines, and medical products in the world and is currently supplying lifesaving vaccines to

several countries and UN agencies, including WHO, UNICEF, and the Pan American Health Organization, among others.

3. United States of America:

The United States plays a pivotal role in maintaining a strong advocacy for global health security. An example is the fight against Polio in which the country is a key partner in the WHO-led eradication efforts; this protects Americans and communities worldwide from the resurgence of this preventable disease. The strong partnership between the United States and WHO for global health security supports other countries in improving their capacity in key health security areas. Similarly, the United States has been critical in delivering life-saving humanitarian assistance to communities devastated by conflict, natural disasters, and disease outbreaks. In partnership with the United States, WHO is advancing innovation in health surveillance and biolab security to address emerging threats. Globally, the United States maintains a strong presence in WHO collaborating centres, providing expertise across fields like cancer, mental health, nutrition, and chronic disease management, further reinforcing its commitment to global health leadership.

4. Nigeria:

Nigeria experienced a large outbreak of Lassa fever, with 4702 suspected cases, five probable cases, and 877 confirmed cases between epidemiological weeks 1 and 15 of 2023 (week ending 16 April). Among confirmed cases, there have been 152 deaths (CFR 17%). Lassa fever is endemic in Nigeria and parts of West Africa where the multimammate rat, the main reservoir of the Lassa virus, is common.

5. China:

China plays a complex, growing, and scrutinized role in the World Health Organization. As a founding member, Beijing balances multilateral rhetoric with pragmatic global health diplomacy, though its financial contributions and influence remain points of intense international debate.

COVID-19, first reported in China in late December 2019, raised global concern, particularly as the cumulative number of cases reported between 10 January and 5 March 2020 reached 80,711.



V-Suggested Solutions:

- **Create Stronger Early-Warning Systems:** Countries should improve systems that detect unusual disease outbreaks and quickly report them to the WHO. Early detection can help stop a disease before it spreads internationally.

- **Improve Healthcare Systems in Vulnerable Countries:** The WHO and wealthier countries can provide funding, medical equipment, training, and laboratory support to countries with weaker healthcare systems. This would help all countries respond faster to outbreaks.
- **Increase International Cooperation and Information Sharing:** Countries should quickly share important information about new diseases, including how they spread and how dangerous they are. The WHO can help countries communicate and coordinate their responses.
- **Develop Emergency Medical Supply and Vaccine Plans:** Countries should prepare emergency supplies of masks, medicines, testing materials, and protective equipment before a pandemic occurs. The WHO can also help create plans to make sure vaccines and treatments are distributed fairly between developed and developing countries during an emergency.



VI- Questions to Consider, Tips and Suggested Sites:

A- Questions To Consider:

- What can countries do to detect new infectious diseases before they spread to other countries?
- How can the WHO help countries with weaker healthcare systems prepare for future pandemics?

- How can countries work together and share information when a new dangerous disease is discovered?
- What can governments do to educate people about preventing the spread of infectious diseases without causing fear or panic?
- What lessons from COVID-19 can the WHO and its member states use to better prevent and respond to the next global pandemic?

B- Tips:

- Stay in character at all times during formal sessions, present what the country stands for, and avoid personal opinions and beliefs.
- Be attentive at all times and follow the rules of procedure.
- Prepare debatable yet straightforward questions.
- Keep an eye out for all the latest news and info about the topic and your country's stance.
- Avoid presenting wrongful cases and misinformation.
- Prepare, research, and learn about the cases beyond the ones stated in the background guide.
- Focus on resolving the main issue.
- Remain diplomatic at all times.
- Avoid plagiarism.
- Have fun!

C- Suggested Sites:

- World Health Organization (WHO): <https://www.who.int/>
- WHO– Health Emergencies: <https://www.who.int/our-work/health-emergencies>

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/index.html>
- UNICEF – Health: <https://www.unicef.org/health>

VII- Represented Countries:

Africa	Algeria
	Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC)
	Egypt
	Ethiopia
	Ghana
	Kenya
	Morocco
	Nigeria
	Rwanda
	Senegal
	South Africa
	Tunisia
America & Oceania	Uganda
	Argentina
	Australia

	Brazil
	Canada
	Mexico
	New Zealand
	United States
Asia	Bangladesh
	China
	India
	Indonesia
	Iraq
	Japan
	Jordan
	Lebanon
	Malaysia
	Oman
	Pakistan
	Philippines
	Qatar

	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
	Russian Federation
	Saudi Arabia
	Singapore
	Thailand
	Türkiye
	United Arab Emirates (UAE)
	Vietnam
Europe	France
	Germany
	Italy
	Netherlands
	Norway
	Spain
	Sweden
	Switzerland
	United Kingdom

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IX- President's Note:

Dear Delegates,

It is my pleasure to welcome you to the World Health Organization (*WHO*) Committee, where we will be discussing “Preventing the Next Global Pandemic of Emerging Infectious Diseases.” This year’s theme, Yin and Yang, reminds us that balance is essential when facing global challenges. Just as Yin and Yang represent different forces that depend on one another, protecting global health requires a balance between prevention and response, national interests and international cooperation, and individual responsibility and collective action. Throughout this committee, you will encounter different opinions, priorities, and challenges, but these differences should encourage meaningful debate and help us create balanced and effective solutions. I encourage every delegate to participate,



cooperate, think creatively, and respect different perspectives while working toward the shared goal of protecting global health. Remember that even when nations disagree, diplomacy and cooperation can help us find common ground. I look forward to witnessing your ideas, debates, and solutions come to life, and I wish you all to have an unforgettable experience throughout this conference. **Best Of Luck!**

X-SGs' Note:

Dear Delegates,

As your Secretaries-General, we hope this background guide gives you a strong foundation for the discussions ahead and helps you approach your committee with confidence. Beyond preparation, this conference is an opportunity to challenge yourself, step into new perspectives, and take part in conversations that demand thought and initiative.

This year's theme, "Yin and Yang: The Harmony in Opposites", reflects the idea that opposing sides can exist in balance, whether between conflict and cooperation or speaking and listening. It reminds us that meaningful progress often begins when we learn to understand perspectives different from our own.

As Leo Buscaglia said, "Change is the end result of all true learning," and we hope this experience leaves you with a stronger sense of the value your voice can carry. We cannot wait to meet you and see what you bring to this conference.

Warm regards,

The 15th HHHSMUN Secretaries General,

Mia, Hani and Omar

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